REMARKS

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 are pending. Claims 21-23 are added. Accordingly, claims 1-3 and 5-23 are at issue.

35 U.S.C. §112 Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Independent claim 1 is amended to delete the recited "lower portion" of the motorcycle, which the Examiner alleged was unclear. Furthermore, claim 1 is amended to more clearly call for an "inflation control means spaced upwardly from the retainer upon airbag inflation..." Claims 13 and 19 are similarly amended with respect to spacing of the recited inflation control member from the retainer. Therefore, as all the deficiencies alleged by the Examiner are remedied, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejections

Claims 1-3 and 5-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hosono et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,007,090) in view of Nagata et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,945,184). The rejections, as they may apply to the claims presented herein, are respectfully traversed.

Amended independent claim 1 recites an inflated airbag and an inflation control means. The airbag is for being deployed in a primarily, upward vertical direction. The inflation control means restricts inflation of the airbag in a predetermined fore and aft direction that is generally aligned with rider movement during frontal collisions. The inflation control member is sized so that size of the

inflated airbag in the upward vertical direction is substantially larger than in the predetermined fore and aft direction. Applicant respectfully asserts that neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest such a feature.

Rather, Hosono et al. fail to even disclose the recited inflation control means. *See* Office Action dated 6/27/2005, Page 4. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully asserts that Nagata et al. fail to disclose an inflated airbag sized substantially larger in the upward vertical direction than in the predetermined fore and aft direction. Nagata et al., rather, disclose an inflated airbag sized substantially equally in the upward vertical and the fore and aft directions, as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 5 of Nagata et al. Moreover, Applicant respectfully asserts that not only does Nagata et al. fail to disclose the recited inflation control means, Nagata et al. fail to even suggest the recited inflation control means. Nagata et al. disclose an airbag apparatus for an automobile. The aim of the apparatus disclosed by Nagata et al. is to optimize safety of an automobile occupant during frontal collisions. Therefore, the apparatus disclosed by Nagata et al. maximizes size of the airbag in the fore and aft direction. To the contrary, the airbag apparatus of claim 1 is for a motorcycle and aims to increase the vertical size and area of the airbag generally parallel to the rider. Therefore, because the aim of the apparatus disclosed by Nagata et al. is distinct from that of claim 1, Nagata et al. cannot suggest the subject matter of claim 1.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 1 should be in condition for allowance because neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest every feature recited therein. Furthermore, claims 2, 3 and 5-12 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

In addition, Applicant respectfully asserts that various dependent claims of present application clearly define over the cited prior art. For example, dependent claim 11 recites a forward portion of the airbag having a pair of connections to the inflation control means. The cited references fail to disclose such features and therefore, the invention of claim 11 is clearly distinguished therefrom.

Amended independent claim 13 recites an airbag and at least one direction control member. The control member restricts inflation of the airbag in a controlled direction so that size of the inflated airbag in the controlled direction is substantially less than in a primary inflation direction. The controlled direction is generally aligned with forward movement of a rider during frontal collisions and generally transverse to the primary inflation direction. Applicant respectfully asserts that neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest such a feature.

As stated above, Hosono et al. fail to disclose the recited inflation control means. Additionally, Nagata et al. disclose an airbag that is inflated substantially equally in a direction aligned with rider movement and a direction transverse to the rider movement, as depicted in Figs. 1 and 5 of Nagata et al. Hence, Nagata et al. fail to disclose a control member restricting inflation of an airbag so that size of the airbag upon inflation is substantially less in one direction than in another direction.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 13 should be in condition for allowance because neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest every feature recited therein. Furthermore, claims 14-18 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Amended independent claim 19 recites providing an airbag, a retainer for the airbag, and at least one direction control member. Furthermore, claim 19 recites

connecting first and second ends of the direction control member to the airbag such that they are spaced by first and second predetermined distances from the retainer. The first and second predetermined distances are approximately equal. Applicant respectfully asserts that neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest such a feature.

As stated above, Hosono et al. fail to even disclose the recited inflation control means. Furthermore, Nagata et al. fail to disclose connecting first and second ends of an inflation control member to the airbag at approximately equal first and second predetermined distances from the retainer. Nagata et al., rather, disclose a sheet 19 having a front side end portion 19a and a rear side end portion 19b. The front side end portion 19a is attached to the airbag at a location that is substantially closer to the retainer (7, 9) than the rear side end portion 19b, as shown in Figs. 1 and 5 of Nagata et al. Hence, Nagata et al. cannot suggest connecting opposing ends of an inflation control means at approximately equal predetermined distances from the retainer because Nagata et al. fail to even disclose opposing ends at approximately equal distances from the retainer.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 19 should be in condition for allowance because neither Hosono et al. nor Nagata et al., alone or in combination, teach or suggest every feature recited therein. Furthermore, claim 20 should be in condition for allowance as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Thus, in view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

New Claims

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully asserts that new claims 21-23 should also be in condition for allowance as being dependent on allowable base claims.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that all stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot and therefore, the current application should be in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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